

# Your Coursework



What you need to know



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# Your coursework

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## **This booklet tells you what you need to know about your coursework.**

It contains essential information and rules that you must read before you start producing work that will be submitted for marking – even if you have submitted coursework in previous years.

## **It is important that you understand the rules.**

They are there to make sure that coursework assessments are fair for everyone. If you are unclear about anything, speak to your teacher or lecturer. They will also be able to let you know about the penalties that could be applied if you don't follow the rules.

You'll also find lots more helpful information at **[www.sqa.org.uk/learners](http://www.sqa.org.uk/learners)**

### **Additional support**

If you need additional support, specific arrangements can be put in place to give you an equal chance to show what you know and what you can do. You don't need to ask SQA about this yourself – your school or college will do it for you if required. If you would like to know more about the assessment arrangements that might be suitable for you, please speak to your teacher or lecturer.

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# What is coursework?

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There are different types of coursework, including portfolios, projects and assignments. Your coursework will depend on the course you're studying.

Coursework is your chance to show you know your subject and to gain marks that could make a big difference to your final grade.

Each piece of coursework will have different requirements — your teacher or lecturer will tell you about these.

## Completing your coursework

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### Sources

You may be able to use lots of different sources to support your work — such as books, TV and the internet. Using different sources is also a great way to learn.

It is important to know that you can't copy material from sources and include it as if it were your own work. You must acknowledge and clearly reference all material from sources so that it is clear what work is not your own.

Your teacher or lecturer can tell you how to do this, but here are a few pointers:

- Use "quotation marks" around any text that has come from other sources and identify clearly what those sources are.
- Think about any diagrams or illustrations you've used — their sources need to be referenced too.
- Create a bibliography (a list of references you have used) if you need one — it goes at the end of your work.



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# Completing your coursework

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## Plagiarism

You must not pretend that other people's work is yours. Passing off other people's work and ideas as your own is called plagiarism — and it's cheating.

If you don't acknowledge sources in your coursework, that counts as plagiarism too.

It's not your own work if:

- all or some of it has been worked on by someone else
- it's been done by another candidate, a brother, sister, friend, or anyone who's produced similar coursework in the past
- it's example work that's been prepared by your teacher or lecturer
- you've copied it from a book, an internet site, or an essay bank

## Do it yourself

Working with others when you should be working alone is called collusion. This applies to giving help, getting help, and sharing passwords, files and paperwork.

Everyone involved in collusion is breaking the rules — not just the person who has asked for help. If another candidate asks you for help, you should suggest that they speak to the teacher or lecturer.

If you are working as part of a group (eg on a group project), you must make sure that the written work you submit as part of the group work is your own.

If you are having difficulty with coursework, the best advice comes directly from your teachers and lecturers.

## Language and writing

Everyone submitting coursework is expected to show respect to other candidates, teachers, lecturers, markers and SQA. Don't include rude, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or images in your work — if you do, markers will investigate.

Remember that written coursework must be legible. Markers will do their best to read your work but they might not be able to award marks if your writing is difficult to read.

## Word count

If your coursework states a maximum word count, you must always stick to this. It's important that you don't go over it.

## Resource sheets

Some types of coursework are completed under controlled conditions and allow you to use a resource sheet. Resource sheets are sometimes also known as research sheets or processed information sheets.

You must familiarise yourself with the rules on how to use and submit resource sheets, and make sure you stick to these rules. Your teacher or lecturer will be able to tell you about them.

### Don't risk it — spotting plagiarism and collusion isn't difficult

- Teachers and lecturers are familiar with your work and can spot changes in writing style and use of language.
- Markers know their subject inside out so they're familiar with lots of sources.
- SQA uses software that identifies plagiarism and collusion. This software matches copied phrases and text with the sources they've been taken from.

# Submitting your coursework

## Check your work

Before you hand in your coursework, you must look over it and check that:

- everything is your own work, and sources are properly acknowledged and referenced
- any work that you are submitting from previous years meets the rules too
- there is no rude, abusive or offensive language or imagery
- you have completed your coursework in line with the instructions given by your teacher or lecturer

## Deadlines

It's important that you get your work in on time.

Deadlines will be set by your teacher or lecturer and it's up to you to make sure you meet them. The best way to do this is to aim to submit your work before the deadline day.

Depending on the type of coursework you're doing, you should show it to your teacher or lecturer as you're going along. This will help to address any issues as they come up, which will help you to get everything ready on time. Speak to your teacher or lecturer to find out the kind of support they can offer.

Don't panic if you find you are struggling to meet a deadline. Talk to your teacher or lecturer to see what can be done to help.

## Declaration

Before your school or college submits your coursework to SQA for marking, they will give you a declaration to sign. It's really important that you understand this declaration. Please have a read of it now and ask your teacher or lecturer if you're unsure about anything.

### *I confirm that:*

- *I have read SQA's Your Coursework booklet and I understand its contents*
- *I understand that SQA may impose penalties on candidate awards where the rules in the Your Coursework booklet have not been followed*
- *the coursework submitted with this declaration is all my own work with all sources of information clearly identified and acknowledged*
- *I understand that this coursework will be submitted to SQA for marking*

If you plan to publish or share your work online, you must discuss this with your school or college.



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# What if you break the rules?

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Breaking these rules can have serious consequences. If an investigation finds you've broken any rules, a penalty may be applied.

The penalty will depend on the severity of the matter — this will be decided by SQA.

The range of penalties includes:

- Your marks can be reduced — or you can be awarded zero marks.
- Your qualification for the subject concerned can be cancelled.
- All of your qualifications for the entire year can be cancelled.

If you stick to the rules and do the right thing every step of the way, you won't need to worry about these penalties.



Everyone wants you to enjoy your courses and do well. Remember that your teachers and lecturers are there to help you and you can always ask them for advice.

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# Remember

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- ✓ Acknowledge all sources
- ✓ Check your work before handing it in
- ✓ Hand your work in on time
- ✓ Do it yourself

- ✗ Don't copy someone else's work
- ✗ Don't use rude, abusive or offensive words or images

# Your Coursework

